From: steved@ncat.org%inter2 [steved@ncat.org] on behalf of steved@ncat.org
Sent: Saturday, August 13, 2005 11:47 PM
To: Benham, Katherine
Subject: [Fwd: Note on Composts and Compost Teas, for NOSB]

Attachments: ATTACHMENT.TXT
Ms. Benham -

Please add these notes to the public comment for
NOSB regarding Composts and Compost Teas.

Steve Diver
Fayetteville, Arkansas

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: Note on Composts and Compost Teas, for NOSB
Date: Thu, 11 Aug 2005 16:17:05 -0500
From: Steve Diver <steved@ncat.org>
To:rosiesfarm@mindspring.com, esideman@mofga.org, Steve Diver <steved@ncat.org>

Dear Rose Koenig -

Hello from a NOSB Compost Tea Task
Force member, in Arkansas.

I was talking to Eric Sidemen regarding items in the
proposed draft to NOSB Crops Committee on Composts
that he shared with the CT Task Force, as below.

"Use of Compost, Vermicompost, Processed Manure,
and Compost teas" - Draft
National Organic Standards Board
Crops Committee Recommendation for Guidance
http://www.ams.usda.gov/nosb/meetingbooks/August2005/CompostTea.pdf

However, Eric explained there was a modified version
in circulation. He shared your email with me, and explained
I should send any comments to you.

Thus, I refer to Draft-3 Rosie's Modifications.

Upon examination, it is much simplified. It will provide

clarity and move these amendments forward for on-farm use and for organic inspection.

The Draft 3 also resolves a problem that I observed in the earlier draft; i.e., section 1.g that presumes laboratory testing for every compost batch.

However, there is one remaining concern that I see causing potential fits for "compost tea" users and organic farm inspectors.

Since the NOSB Compost Tea Task Force released its report, further developments and clarification have arisen with respect to compost extracts.

There are several companies manufacturing compost extract machines. These extracts are made without any tea additives such as molasses. However, they are held in storage for longer periods than one hour, and in fact retain good quality for weeks. They contain biological components in a non-metabolizing state, since they have not been amended with tea additives or stimulated with additional oxygen.

The advantage of these compost extracts is they can be stored and transported, and because they do not require aeration, brewing, and testing typical of aerated compost teas.

Once they are taken to the field, they are injected into irrigation systems for soil application. They are commonly amended at point of injection with molasses, fish, and soluble nutrients to deliver a complete liquid organic fertilizer and biological inoculant.

For example, the Compost Tea Extractor -- invented by Dennis Hronek -- is manufactured and distributed by Natural Earth Solutions.

Natural Earth Solutions
http://www.naturalearthsolutions.com/CTE.htm

There are several compost tea application companies that

use the compost extract machine to make large batches. These are stored, then transported to farms several hours away.

They are typically soil applied only. Aerated compost teas are still made for foliar applications, since actively metabolizing organisms stick better to leaves.

But for soil applications, these compost extracts completely avoid the time-consuming process of tea brewing. Once these mixed liquid ingredients are delivered to the soil, the biological component then becomes active.

It is my understanding that this management system is now being used on much greater total acreages than compost teas.

Thus, the NOSB passage that states "Compost extracts - resulting from any mixture of compost, water, additives, and adjuvants that are not held for more than one hour before use - may be applied without restriction" is effected.

This language on compost extracts came largely from Steven Scheuerell's journal article and CTTF report.

It is now outdated by referring to compost extracts as being held for one hour or less.

The new technology underway with compost extracts is a dynamic development, which I expect to increase even more substantially.

Hopefully, this makes sense and is helfpul as an alert to developing technology and NOSB language.

Best regards,

Steve Diver
Fayetteville, Arkansas